



**Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth
Bureau of Construction Codes
P.O. Box 30254
Lansing, Michigan 48909
(517) 241-9302**

Bureau of Construction Codes Technical Bulletin

Publication Number 12

Updated: July 2006

Instrument Technician

“Providing for Michigan’s Safety in the Built Environment”

Technical bulletins are issued to provide clarification on issues that arise regarding code administration and enforcement. The information provided in the bulletin is developed to promote uniform interpretation and enforcement of the state codes.

DLEG is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids, services and other reasonable accommodations are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

INSTRUMENT TECHNICIAN

Issue

Is the work performed by instrument technicians regulated by the Electrical Administrative Act, Act No. 217, 1965?

Discussion

The Electrical Licensing Law requires all work performed on electrical equipment to be completed by a licensed electrician. However, instrument technicians claim the work they perform is not in and of itself, electrical work, as defined in the Electrical Law.

Electrical wiring is defined in the Electrical Administrative Act, 1956 PA 217 as:

“...all wiring, generating equipment, fixtures, appliances, and appurtenances in connection with the generation, distribution, and utilization of electrical energy, within or on a building, residence, structure, or properties, and including service entrance wiring as defined by the code.”

Section 7(2) of the Electrical Administrative Act states:

“Except as otherwise provided in this act or in subsection (3), a person, other than a person duly licensed under this act and employed by and working under the direction of a holder of an electrical contractor’s license, shall not in any manner undertake to execute any electrical wiring.”

The work performed by an instrument technician has been described as the calibration, troubleshooting, and repair of instrumentation and control wiring in a process system. Instrumentation devices monitor the assigned task and either signal a trouble indicator or an affirmation of the process as part of an electrical control system.

The temporary attachment of such metering instruments for the purpose of monitoring certain devices or for the calibration of equipment should not become a permanent part of the wiring system. However, when these devices are installed or added as a permanent part of the process of controlling electrical equipment, it is classified as electrical wiring and the installer is subject to the requirements of licensure.

The calibration, troubleshooting, and repair of these monitoring devices are not functions regulated under the electrical licensing law. The removal and/or replacement of such equipment from the permanent electrical system is defined as electrical work under the current licensing law.

Conclusion

Permanently wired monitoring devices installed and/or removed for the monitoring, calibration or troubleshooting within electrical systems is defined as electrical work under the Electrical Administrative Act. Therefore, a licensed, journey electrician, under the supervision of an electrical contractor, must perform the work.

The testing or calibration of monitoring equipment is not defined as electrical work and may be performed by non-licensed persons, such as instrument technicians.

The temporary use of monitoring devices without permanent connection to the electrical wiring system is not defined as electrical work and may be performed by non-licensed persons, such as an Instrument Technician.

Questions regarding this technical bulletin may be directed to the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth, Bureau of Construction Codes, Electrical Division, P.O. Box 30254, Lansing, MI 48909 or by calling (517) 241-9320.